DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 397 913 JC 960 522

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TITLE	Follow-Up Study of Former Students in Geography, History and Political Science, 1990-1995. Volume XXIV, Number 20.
INSTITUTION	William Rainey Harper Coll., Palatine, Ill. Office of Planning and Research.
PUB DATE	Jun 96
NOTE	47p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Classroom Environment; Community Colleges; *Course Evaluation; *Geography Instruction; *History Instruction; Instructional Effectiveness; Participant Satisfaction; *Political Science; *Student Attitudes; Student Educational Objectives; Transfer Students; Two Year Colleges; Two Year College Students
IDENTIFIERS	William Rainey Harper College IL

ABSTRACT

As part of a review of the Geography, History, and Political Science department, William Rainey Harper College (WRHC), in Illinois, conducted a study of students who had enrolled in three or more courses in the department from 1990 to 1995 and who were not enrolled in fall 1995. Questionnaires were sent to a random sample of 300 students, requesting information on their reasons for enrolling, perceptions of the learning environment in the courses, and present educational status. Study findings, based on responses from 93 students, included the following: (1) 71 percent of the students indicated that they had enrolled in the courses to satisfy a general education requirement for a bachelor's or associate degree, while 20 percent had enrolled to help build a major or a minor; (2) among students who had taken lecture sections with more than 75 students, 60 percent felt the classes were too large and that they inhibited dialogue between students and faculty; (3) of 14 attributes of the learning environment, quality of instruction, fairness of grading, degree to which exams matched course goals, effectiveness of teaching methods, rigor of course, and the degree to which the course helped with other courses were the only attributes to receive better than "good" ratings; and (4) the two worst rated attributes were the degree that courses helped with community life and that they helped with respondents' jobs. The survey instrument is appended. (TGI)

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William Rainey Harper College

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Volume XXIV, No. 20
June 1996

FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF FORMER STUDENTS IN GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE 1990-1995

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JC 960 522

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to follow-up former students in Geography, History or Political Science to determine why they enrolled in these courses, how they rated the learning environment in these courses and what was their present educational status. A sample of 300 students were drawn from all those enrolling in three or more of the above named courses between 1990-1995 and were not enrolled in the fall of 1995. After two mailings, 93 former students returned completed surveys for a 31 percent response rate.

Results showed that in large lecture sections (larger than 75 students) more that half felt the classes were too large and that they inhibited dialogue between students and faculty both inside and outside of class. Lecture methods were by far the most frequent teaching method and was rated by far as the most effective method. Similarly multiple choice tests were the most frequently used assessment strategy and was judged clearly as the most effective strategy.

Geography, History and Political Science courses at Harper were judged on 14 attributes of their learning environment and less than half received a rating of good or better. Even fewer were rated better than the college to which the students transferred. However, in contrast, over half of the respondents offered general comments and these were overwhelmingly positive.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	Purpose	1
II.	Methodology and Population Surveyed	1
III.	Major Conclusions	1
IV.	Discussion of Results	1-2
V.	Detailed Results	
A.	Previous College Background - Current Educational Status	3
B.	Primary Reason Student Took Geography, History and Political Science	3
C.	Judgment About Various Class Size Ranges	3
D.	College to Which Transferred	3
E.	Those Who Transferred but Have Not Yet Achieved a Bachelors Degree	4
F.	Those Who Transferred and Have Achieved at Least a Bachelors Degree	4-5
G.	Negative Effects for Those Who Felt Class Size Was Too Large	5
H.	Rating of Courses	5
I.	Rating of Learning Environment in Comparison with Other Colleges	6
J.	How Courses Transferred	6
K.	Evaluation of Teaching Methods/Assessment Strategies in Geography	6-7
L.	Evaluation of Teaching Methods/Assessment Strategies in History	7
M.	Evaluation of Teaching Methods/Assessment Strategies in Political Science	7
N.	General Comments	8-10
VI.	Graphs	
A.	Previous to Harper College Experience	11
B.	Current Educational Status	12
C.	Primary Reason for Taking Geography, History and Political Science	13
D.	Judgments about Effectiveness of Class Sizes	14 - 16
E.	For Those Transferring - Type of College	17
F.	For Those Transferring - Type of Major	18
G.	Excellence Rating of Learning Environment	19
H.	Comparison of Learning Environments	20
I.	Evaluation of Assessment Strategies	21
J.	Evaluation of Teaching Methods	22
VII.	Appendix	

- Cover Letter
- Survey Instrument

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to follow-up former students in Geography, History or Political Science to determine why they enrolled in these courses, how they rated the learning environment in these courses and what was their present educational status. This study was part of the Program Review process and was requested by the Department Chair of Geography, History and Political Science.

Methodology and Population Surveyed

The survey instrument shown in the appendix was jointly designed by the Office of Planning and Research and the Department Chair of Geography, History and Political Science. The survey population was defined by all students who had enrolled in three or more courses in Geography, History and Political Science between 1990 and 1995 and were not enrolled in the fall of 1995. From this group a random sample of 300 were drawn. The survey was mailed to this sample, and after three weeks, a second survey was mailed to non-respondents. After these two mailings, 93 responded for a 31 percent response rate.

Major Conclusions

Results showed that in large lecture sections (larger than 75 students) more than half felt the classes were too large and that they inhibited dialogue between students and faculty inside and outside of class. Lecture methods were by far the most frequent teaching method and was rated by far as the most effective method. Similarly multiple choice tests were the most frequently used assessment strategy and was judged clearly the most effective strategy.

Geography, History and Political Science courses at Harper were judged on 14 attributes of their learning environment and less than half received a rating of good or better and even fewer were rated better than the college to which the students transferred. However, in contrast, over half of the respondents offered general comments and these were overwhelmingly positive.

Discussion of Results

Students enrolling in Geography, History and Political Science tend to look more like traditional students than does the general student body. For example, they bring in less college background with them (31% some college and 6% a bachelors degree vs. collegewide 50% some college and 20% a bachelors degree). They are also much more likely to transfer (87% vs. collegewide for transfer goals of 70%). Already (on the average 2.5 years away from Harper) 36 percent have achieved a bachelors degree. Also among those who do transfer more attend private or out-of-state institutions (45% vs. 40% across the College).

The primary reason 71 percent of these former students enrolled in these three disciplines was to satisfy a general educational requirement for their associate or bachelors degree. Some 20 percent enrolled to help build a major or minor while only 17 percent enrolled for their own personal educational development.

These former students were asked to evaluate the size of their classes. Among those in classes of 76 to 150, 60 percent felt the class was too large. Among those in classes of 36 to 75 only 31 percent felt the class was too large while among those in classes of less than 36 only 4 percent said the class was too large. The three principle reasons students gave for the class being too large were: too difficult to ask questions, too difficult to have private conversations with the instructor outside of class and too difficult to have a dialogue in class.

When asked to rate how beneficial the courses were the course rated most beneficial was Cultural Geography but only six students rated this course. All but one of the courses were rated as better than beneficial. The only course rated as less than beneficial was Latin American History.

Fourteen attributes of the learning environment in Geography, History or Political Science were presented to these former students to rate. They were asked to rate each attribute as to its degree of excellence at Harper and if they

Discussion of Results (cont'd)

transferred how each attribute at Harper compared with the same attribute at their new college. Six of the 14 attributes were rated as better than good at Harper and they were: quality of instruction, fairness of grading, degree to which exams matched goals of course, effectiveness of teaching methods, rigor of course and degree to which course helped with other courses. The two attributes rated worst (between good and acceptable) were degree to which course helped with community life and helped with their present job. When compared with their new college, only four of the 14 attributes at Harper rated better than the same four attributes at the new college to which they transferred. These four were fairness of grading, quality of visuals in course, degree to which course helped with community life and quality and usefulness of outside assignments. Quality of instruction, degree to which exams matched goals of course and effectiveness of teaching methods at Harper were rated fairly close to these same attributes at the new colleges to which they transferred. Writing requirements on the other hand were rated much better at the new college than at Harper College.

Almost all courses transferred, but History and Political Science courses were more likely to transfer as a major or minor contribution. Assignment of a term paper would definitely have helped 23 percent of these former students while 36 percent were unsure. The biggest contribution that a required term paper would make would be to improve writing skills. Smaller but significant contributions would be an improvement in research an analysis skills.

Respondents were queried as to how frequently various teaching methods were and how effective they were. Lecture was by far the most frequent method used and was judged by former students as the most effective. Media and class discussions were also used often and were rated as fairly effective but less effective than lecture. Group projects and guest lectures were less than occasionally used and were rated as least effective. These ratings are in contrast to what the Psychology Department found a year earlier. In those ratings class discussion was rated as effective as the lecture.

Following up on examining the teaching methods used these former students were asked about the assessment strategies used. Multiple choice tests were by far the most frequently used means of assessment and was judged by far as the most effective. Short answer tests, assigned papers, essay exams and evaluation of class participation were the assessment strategies next most frequently used and were rated as less effective than multiple choice tests. Research evaluation, take home projects and oral presentations were the least frequently used and judged to be least effective. These findings were again in contrast to the findings discovered by Psychology. In their study a year earlier assigned papers were rated as more effective than multiple choice tests and short answer tests and essay tests were rated as effective as multiple choice tests.

Finally these former students were presented an opportunity to make general comments. Over half the sample (57%) took advantage of this opportunity and 70 percent of the comments were completely positive. In fact, the comments appeared to judge Geography, History and Political Science courses on a higher level than did the rating scale.

Follow-up Study of Former Students in Geography, History or Political Science

Previous College Background Prior to Harper College	N	PCT
- No previous college	58	62.4
- Some college courses	29	31.2
- Bachelors degree or higher	6	6.4
Total	93	100.0

Current Educational Status	N	PCT
- Transferred/no Bachelors degree yet	47	51.1
- Transferred/earned Bachelors degree	33	35.9
- Plan to transfer soon	5	5.4
- No plans to transfer	7	7.6
Total	92	100.0

Primary Reason Former Student Took Geography, History and Political Science at Harper College	N	PCT of 93
- To satisfy a general education requirement for associate degree	42	45.2
- To satisfy a general education requirement for bachelors program where they have transferred	32	34.4
- To build credit toward a major or minor in bachelors program where they have transferred	19	20.4
- For their own personal educational development	16	17.2
- To satisfy teacher certification requirements	6	6.5
- To satisfy requirements for entry into graduate program	4	4.3
- Chose course and faculty member because they wanted challenge	1	1.1

Judgment About Various Class Size Ranges

	Effectiveness Index	Up to 35 N	Up to 35 PCT	36 - 75 N	36 - 75 PCT	76 - 150 N	76 - 150 PCT
- Class too large	-1	3	4.2	18	31.0	31	59.6
- Size was effective	+1	57	79.1	20	34.5	7	13.5
- No strong feelings	0	12	16.7	20	34.5	14	26.9
		72	100.0	58	100.0	52	100.0
Total	182						
Percent	100	39.5		31.9		28.6	
Average Effectiveness Index		+.75		+.03		-.46	

Those Who Transferred But Have Not Yet Achieved a Bachelors Degree

College to Which Transferred	N	PCT		N	PCT
- Northern Illinois University	11	23.4	- Univ. Of Wisconsin/Madison	1	2.2
- Univ. Of Illinois/Champaign/Urbana	5	10.6	- Rock Valley Comm. College	1	2.1
- Roosevelt	5	10.6	- Ball State	1	2.1
- Northeastern University	4	8.5	- St. Norbert	1	2.1
- DePaul	4	8.5	- University of Michigan	1	2.1
- National Louis University	2	4.3	- North Central	1	2.1
- Elmhurst	2	4.3	- Beloit	1	2.1
- Illinois State University	2	4.3	- Loyola	1	2.1
- Columbia College, Chicago	1	2.2	- Creighton	1	2.1
- Barat	1	2.2	- University of Nebraska	1	2.1

Total - 47
Percent- 100

Those Who Transferred But Have Not Yet Achieved a Bachelors Degree

Major	N	PCT		N	PCT
- Elementary Education	11	22.0	- Marketing Textiles	1	2.0
- History	5	10.0	- Political Science	1	2.0
- Education	3	6.0	- International Business	1	2.0
- English	3	6.0	- Human & Indiv. Development	1	2.0
- Mass Communications	3	6.0	- International Studies	1	2.0
- Biology	2	4.0	- Civil Engineering	1	2.0
- Spanish	2	4.0	- Liberal Arts	1	2.0
- Special Education	2	4.0	- Anthropology	1	2.0
- Secondary Education	2	4.0	- Public Administration	1	2.0
- Psychology	2	4.0	- Technology	1	2.0
- Finance	2	4.0	- Fiction Writing	1	2.0
- Early Childhood Education	1	2.0	- History of Culture	1	2.0

Total 50 Percent 100

Categorized Colleges	N	PCT
- Public Universities - Illinois	23	48.9
- Private Institutions - Illinois	18	38.3
- Out-of-State Institutions	6	12.8
Total	47	100.0

Categorized Majors	N	PCT
- Education	19	38.0
- Social Sciences	12	24.0
- Liberal Arts	10	20.0
- Business	5	10.0
- Science and Engineering	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0

Those Who Transferred and Have Achieved at Least a Bachelors Degree

College to Which Transferred	N	PCT		N	PCT
- Northern Illinois University	4	12.9	- University of Texas	1	3.2
- Northeastern Illinois University	4	12.9	- University of Missouri	1	3.2
- University of Illinois/Champaign	3	9.7	- Randolph Macon College	1	3.2
- Illinois State University	3	9.7	- Columbia	1	3.2
- Eastern Illinois University	2	6.5	- Southern Illinois University	1	3.2
- Roosevelt	2	6.5	- University of Illinois/Chicago	1	3.2
- Marquette	1	3.3	- Western Illinois University	1	3.2
- Elmhurst	1	3.3	- Illinois College	1	3.2
- Concordia	1	3.2	- University of Miami	1	3.2
- Barat	1	3.2			

Total 31 Percent 100

Major	N	PCT		N	PCT
- Elementary Education	4	12.9	- International Relations	1	3.2
- Mass Communications	4	12.9	- Accounting	1	3.2
- Marketing	3	9.7	- Special Education	1	3.2
- History	3	9.7	- Electrical Engineering	1	3.2
- Social Sciences	2	6.5	- Criminal Justice	1	3.2
- Political Science	1	3.3	- Psychology	1	3.2
- Retailing	1	3.3	- Physical Education	1	3.2
- English	1	3.3	- Biology	1	3.2
- Music Education	1	3.2	- Finance	1	3.2
- Early Childhood Education	1	3.2	- Mathematics	1	3.2

Total 31 Percent 100

Those Who Transferred and Have Achieved
at Least a Bachelors Degree

Categorized Institutions	N	PCT
- Public Universities - Illinois	19	61.3
- Private Institutions - Illinois	6	19.4
- Out-of-State Institutions	6	19.3
Total	31	100.0

Categorized Majors	N	PCT
- Education	8	25.8
- Social Sciences	8	25.8
- Business/Public Service	7	22.6
- Liberal Arts	5	16.1
- Math, Science, Engineering	3	9.7
Total	31	100.0

Negative Effects for Those Who Felt
Class Size was Too Large

Effect	N	PCT/41
- It was too difficult to ask questions	28	68.3
- It was too difficult to have a dialogue between students in class	22	53.7
- It was too difficult to have private conversations with instructor	20	48.8
- Student received little meaningful feedback from instructor	14	34.1
- Had multiple choice tests rather than essays	4	9.8
- Too noisy - difficult to hear	2	4.9
- No interaction between students and instructor	1	2.4
- Too easy just to lecture	1	2.4
- Telecourse was too easy	1	2.4
- Poorly taught course - nothing learned	1	2.4

Rating of Courses

Only Those with 6 or more Ratings	N	Average Benefit Index*
GEG108 Cultural	6	1.17
PSC220 Suburban/Urban/State	6	1.50
PSC250 Comparative	6	1.50
GEG210 Economics	8	1.62
HST243 Far East	25	1.68
PSC101 Amer.Politics/Gov't	67	1.70
HST142 Western Civilization Since 1650	17	1.71
HST111 American Civilization to 1877	62	1.76
HST141 Western Civilization to 1650	21	1.76
HST112 America since 1877	48	1.83
HST121 Latin America	24	2.21

Only Those with Fewer than 5 Ratings	N	Average Benefit Index*
HST210 Women/American Experience	4	1.00
PSC260 Middle Eastern	2	1.00
PSC270 Global	2	1.00
GEG103 Developing World	1	1.00
HST214 African American	1	1.00

*Benefit Index: 1 = Very Beneficial
2 = Beneficial
3 = Some benefit
4 = No benefit

Rating of Learning Environment in Geography, History And Political Science and Comparison with Other Colleges

Learning Environment Attribute	N	Average Excellence Index*	N	Average Comparison Index**
- Quality of instruction	86	1.60	48	2.02
- Fairness of grading	86	1.71	47	1.91
- Degree to which exams matched goals of course	86	1.78	47	2.02
- Effectiveness of teaching methods	86	1.80	47	2.04
- Rigor of course	87	1.86	47	2.15
- Degree to which course helped with other courses	53	1.92	29	2.14
- Degree to which courses lifted horizons with new ideas not thought of before	85	2.02	47	2.13
- Degree to which student learned to organize thoughts	86	2.03	47	2.11
- Quality and usefulness of textbooks used	84	2.12	47	1.98
- Value and usefulness of outside assignments	71	2.14	36	2.11
- Quality of visuals in course	85	2.19	47	1.94
- Writing requirements	85	2.24	47	2.32
- Degree to which courses helped in community life	73	2.34	40	1.95
- Degree to which courses helped on present job	66	2.55	36	2.11

* Excellence Index: 1 = Excellent
2 = Good
3 = Acceptable
4 = Unsatisfactory

** Comparison Index: 1 = Harper was better
2 = They Were the Same
3 = New College was Better

How Courses Transferred

Transfer Outcomes	Geography N	Geography PCT	History N	History PCT	Political Science N	Political Science PCT
- Transferred as major or minor	5	18.5	26	34.7	19	31.7
- Transferred as general elective	20	74.1	48	64.0	41	68.3
- Courses did not transfer	2	7.1	1	1.3	0	0
Total	27	100.0	75	100.0	60	100.0

Would Assignment of Term Papers Have Helped in Present Situation	N	PCT
- Definitely Yes	19	23.5
- Maybe	29	35.8
- No	33	40.7
Total	81	100.0

How Assignment of Term Paper Would Have Helped	N	PCT
- Improve writing skills	12	50.0
- Improve research skills	5	20.8
- Improve analysis skills	4	16.7
- Improve knowledge base	2	8.3
- Reference in future courses	1	4.2
Total	24	100.0

Evaluation of Teaching Methods in Geography

Teaching Method	N	Average Frequency Index*	N	Average Effectiveness Index**
- Lecture by instructor	26	1.31	25	1.64
- Use of media - video/slides/etc.	26	1.96	24	1.79
- Class discussion	26	2.38	25	2.20
- Group projects	26	3.08	24	2.71
- Guest lectures	26	3.65	19	2.95

Evaluation of Assessment Strategies in Geography

Assessment Strategy	N	Average Frequency Index*	N	Average Effectiveness Index**
- Multiple choice tests	26	1.50	24	1.88
- Short answer tests	25	2.36	23	2.17
- Assigned papers	25	2.84	22	2.32
- Essay exams	25	3.04	20	2.30
- Take home projects	25	3.08	19	2.53
- Research evaluation	25	3.44	19	2.95
- Oral presentations	25	3.48	17	2.71

Evaluation of Teaching Methods in History

Teaching Method				
- Lecture by instructor	88	1.19	82	1.83
- Class discussion	88	2.57	77	2.44
- Use of media - videos/slides/etc.	88	2.68	77	2.29
- Group projects	88	3.57	60	3.18
- Guest lecturers	87	3.83	52	3.48

Evaluation of Assessment Strategies in History

Assessment Strategy				
- Multiple choice tests	88	1.44	83	2.06
- Short answer tests	88	2.75	74	2.36
- Evaluation: class participation	87	2.82	75	2.48
- Assigned papers	88	2.84	75	2.29
- Essay exams	87	2.87	73	2.38
- Research Evaluation	84	3.45	60	3.08
- Take home projects	85	3.55	59	3.07
- Oral presentations	86	3.67	59	3.20

Evaluation of Teaching Methods in Political Science

Teaching Method				
- Lecture by instructor	70	1.41	65	1.74
- Class discussion	69	2.14	63	2.02
- Use of media - video/slides, etc.	69	2.57	63	2.22
- Group projects	68	3.04	54	2.69
- Guest lecturers	68	3.44	50	3.08

Evaluation of Assessment Strategies in Political Science

Assessment Strategy				
- Multiple choice tests	69	1.59	64	1.89
- Evaluation: class participation	58	2.19	69	2.57
- Assigned papers	69	2.49	62	2.16
- Short answer tests	68	2.50	57	2.18
- Essay exams	68	2.81	55	2.36
- Take home projects	69	3.17	51	2.65
- Research evaluation	67	3.19	51	2.61
- Oral presentations	69	3.54	45	3.07

* Frequency Index: 1 = Very often
2 = Often
3 = Occasionally
4 = Never

** Effectiveness Index: 1 = Very effective
2 = Effective
3 = Somewhat effective
4 = Not effective

General Comments

- I enjoyed Harper and the teachers there. I would recommend the school to others.
- I thoroughly enjoyed HST243 with Mr. Hook. The class was very interesting.
- I learned a lot taking Political Science. There was plenty of hands-on experience and learning from the course.
- Overall, I think that the teachers did a good job in their instruction and in preparing me for U of I.
- Overall, I have been very pleased with the courses and instructors at Harper - too bad it is not a 4-year institution. Getting a degree there would have been preferable to having to jump to different universities.
- The department was functional and complete in the continuing of education for myself.
- Thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from all, especially the cultural Geography class led by Dr. Larson.
- I feel the courses at Harper were well developed, comprehensive, and challenging. They transferred as regular classes for me and fulfilled my general education requirements for my bachelors degree in elementary education at National Louis University. I feel Harper is a great place to start your college career. I also think it could easily become a 4-year college.
- Dr. King and Dr. Hook were exemplary instructors. The Political Science telecourse demanded rigid discipline. It was far from a "snap" class.
- My Political Science instructor was excellent - she was articulate - and was careful about her personal political opinions. Her lectures never reflected an opinion. She presented material in an understandable way even though it was quite complicated. Lastly, I briefly took this course at my own college, UIUC, and dropped it eventually because the instructor was not a good teacher - was opinionated in many respects and I was extremely turned off by his syllabus, amount of work required - a lot - and topics discussed not relevant. Thanks Madame instructor!
- All three of the courses I took that apply were so different. Mr. Pinnau is an outstanding teacher - lively, organized, humorous - able to involve even the quietest of students. I hope to emulate his teaching style someday. I took HST121 at night - often we were packed into room without even enough desk space. Questions 7-20 are difficult to answer as I took one telecourse, plus PSC101 which was excellent and HST121 which was less than excellent. They do not compare. Mr. Glen Pinnau was one of the best teachers I had at Harper.
- Overall, I would say the courses discussed above were excellent.
- I feel that both the Political Science and History courses I have taken at Harper have helped me in my college career.
- I have taken correspondence courses from U of I on History - also 300 level - harder. By having part-time instructors who have other lives besides school with jobs outside the College, I found them more sympathetic and realistic to the goals of a part-time working student. At NIU all full-time professors think their course is the only thing in your life -- Hooray for Harper!
- I wish I could take the Geography over because I think I would enjoy it much more now. But the History and Political Science have probably been most beneficial.
- To be short, my Political Science instructor, Mr. Glenn Pinnau, was one of the finest teachers I have encountered in 17 years of school. I had not before and have not since been so enthusiastic about learning. His class is one of the fondest memories of a very enjoyable two years at Wm. Rainey Harper College.
- Harper is a great school all around. I loved attending Harper College and wish it was a 4-year university so I didn't have to transfer.
- History 243 and PSC101 were especially interesting to me. I felt the instructors I had got the point across very well. These guys had their heart soul into teaching these subjects and should be told this information for their extra efforts in teaching these classes.
- Telecourses are great for convenience but learningwise is less effective. Latin American History was a wonderful course.
- I really enjoyed these three courses at Harper. All of the instructors were very enthusiastic about what they taught. This made going to class enjoyable and memorable.
- HST111 and 112 were very large lecture classes. I always liked the lectures with Dr. King but the exams did not effectively show what lecture was about. I think you definitely lose something with large lecture classes. Further, all the classes in History, Geography, and Political Science transferred to Miami University which was considerably beneficial.
- Dr. E. Pantaguso - an outstanding educator!
- I enjoyed Harper College and will probably take more courses in the future. It is a "jewel" that is overlooked by the surrounding community.

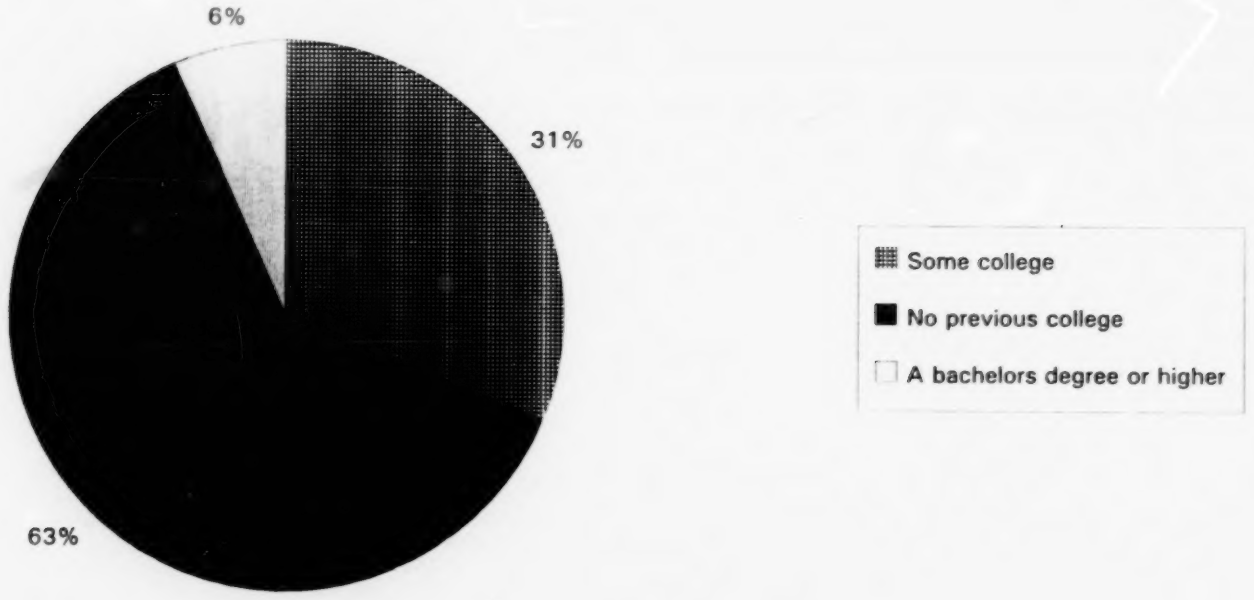
General Comments (cont'd)

- I strongly feel that the Political Science course that I encountered at Harper truly succeeded in convincing me that this country is far worse off than I had ever imagined. It saddens me to know that liberal conspirators such as those who promote the text for "Government by Cons" are allowed to propagate their biased views of history and politics at such a fine institution.
- I got a great deal out of the one political science course I took. One instructor was extremely effective and enjoyable/efficient. I also learned a great deal from the two History courses I took. There was a lot of work and time involved, but I understand a lot after having taken these courses. The instructors I had for those classes were terrific.
- Some of the night teachers were not full time which distracted from their overall effectiveness.
- I took two classes with William Miller - History - and he was an effective professor, but could improve the class through the use of more visual aids. My experience with Larry King - History - was also pleasant and rewarding. I believe the History program at Harper is sound in its academics and worthwhile for students.
- Re PSC101 - telecourse - exams very difficult, questions asked on minute details. Only three exams given for entire course. It would have been easier to prepare for exams if more had been given because less material would have been covered on each test. The instructor's expectations were a bit much for a telecourse. Not only did we have to watch video tapes and read a textbook and be tested on all that material, we were also responsible for keeping abreast of current events in the newspapers. In addition, we were assigned a research project which involved attending meetings, gathering published information and organizing/presenting this material in written form. I never worked so hard for a "B" in all my years in College! Incidentally, I will graduate from Roosevelt University with a 3.96 this Spring! PSC101 sticks in my mind because it was only one of two college courses where I received a "B" - the rest were A's.
- My three History teachers were fabulous.
- My History teacher was extremely intelligent and interesting - one of the best teachers at Harper. Also Glen Pinnau of Political Science was a very organized and effective teacher.
- At least your Political Science Department does not shove their own politics into your face - real learning takes place. NIU was horrendous with this -- Hats off to Harper College!
- Exactly when is English History offered? I see on this questionnaire and see it in the catalog, but in the six semesters I took classes at Harper, never once saw it offered.
- There should be firm policies on pre-requisite courses. Certain courses should be required for all AS and AA students. Also, certain pre-requisites in Political Science should exist such as PSC101 and PSC210.
- Political Science was a very enlightening experience. The teachers I had for Political Science and History were both very good educators from the class I had.
- Dr. Hook was the man who inspired me to major in History.
- I found the History courses at Harper to be unsatisfactory and the Political Science to be fine.
- Professor Larry King made HST111 very interesting.
- HST243 - Far East - Text spellings of names and instructors spelling did not match. Was frustrating trying to figure out if the two names were the same or two different individuals.
- Dr. King - U.S. History - was an excellent instructor. I cannot remember his name, but he shares Dr. King's office - he was an outstanding teacher for PSC101. My Latin History teacher was not as good.
- I learned a lot in the Political Science course.
- My Government and Politics class was the best. The teacher was great as was my History of Latin America professor. I cannot remember teachers names, but they both were fantastic.
- I took my main History and Political Science courses at Harper between 1990 and 1992. They were very helpful and interesting courses. They were used toward my AA and Bachelors degree. The instructors were very fair and knowledgeable. It was a very positive experience.
- History classes should be thought provoking. Instead of learning history, we could argue the fine points of history. This is something we never did. I will give an example -- What were the Federalist Papers for? Sam Adams - What role did he serve? Definitely argumentative. Good vs. bad presidents. You see, we never had a meaningful discussion about that.
- Geography teacher extremely effective although I do not remember his name. Had slide show every class period that was extremely effective in regional geography that made me wish to take cultural geography.
- Professor Miller (HST141 and 142) is a good guy. He was well read, helpful and sincerely interested in the discipline of History.
- I found the instructors in History and Political Science to be excellent.

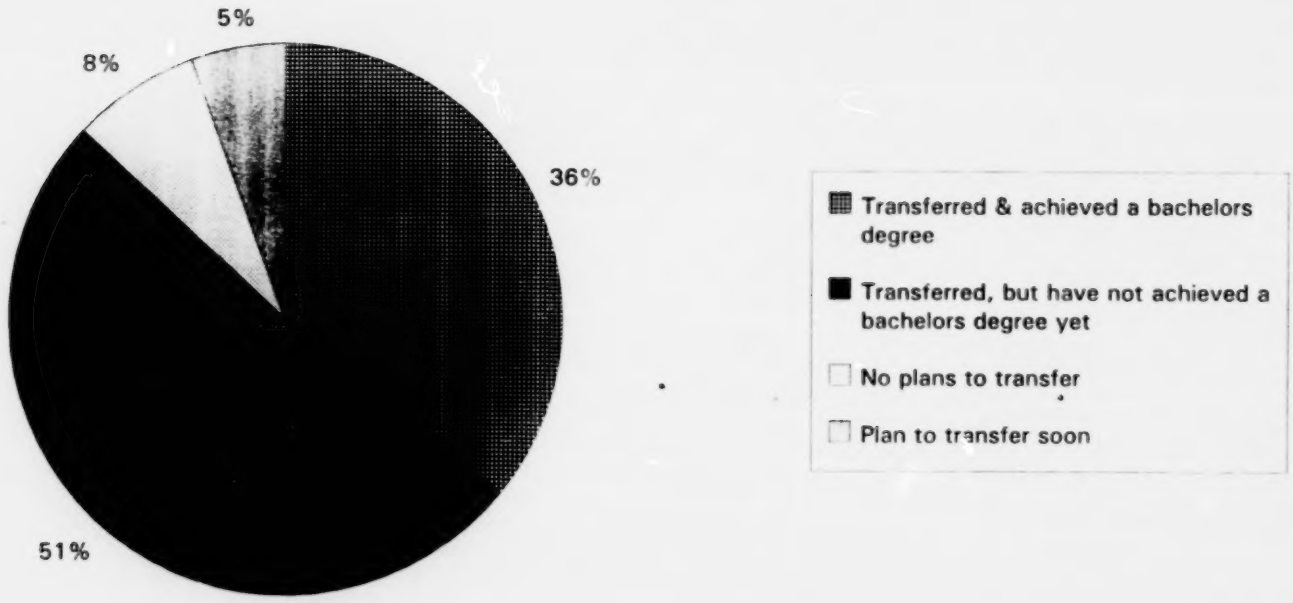
General Comments (cont'd)

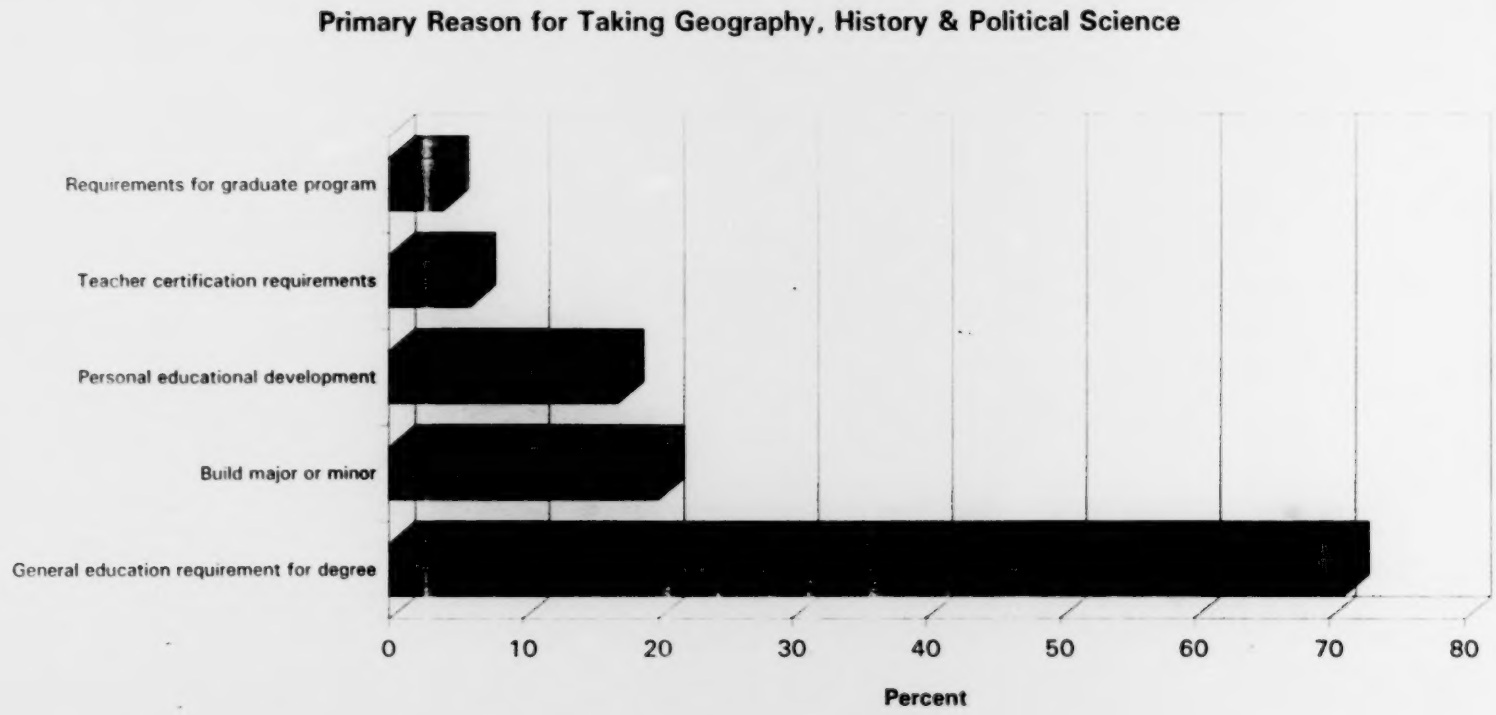
- I think the professor can make a huge difference as to what students get out of any class but especially these types of courses. A lot of people have a hard time getting into these subjects. For me, my Political Science class was great even though I do not like the subject. The teacher made it interesting for the lay person who does not know much about political science or government. Hire more interesting teachers.
- The one class at Harper that I took that was a bad experience was PSC220 taught by a part-time teacher. We had to read the entire text and be tested from it but he never taught from the book at all. The lecture time was a bully pulpit and he was very condescending to the student. I hope he left the teaching profession. By the way, I got an "A" in the class. I could have only come on test days but attendance was mandatory. This class was a disappointment to all 30 of us and I believe we reflected that on our in-class surveys at the time. Other than that, I enjoyed all my History, etc., classes at Harper. The teachers are high caliber. The only difference I have found at Elmhurst is smaller class size and more contact with the teachers - first-name basis.
- I did not take any classes with over 35 students because I felt they were too impersonal.
- Re Nos. 7-20 She marked everything "A" - excellent and wrote, "With the exception of PSC220 which I would rate a "C" at best."
- I found the Geography class I took to be the most interesting classes I took at Harper. I considered minoring in geography. The expectations were very high in my GEG103 class. Political Science was a good class. Glenn Pinnau did a great job teaching. I found my HST111 class to be boring and uninteresting. I had originally dropped it because the teacher was so mean and belittling toward the students. My second professor was very nice but he just read his lecture notes to us.
- I was lucky to have wonderful instructors. The classes I took at Harper helped me with classes I took to get my BA in International Relations. Re: Geography class Nos. 25-37 - Professor Larson was the best instructor in College at Harper. Re: Western Civilization since 1650, Nos. 38-50 - Dr. Hook's class was excellent. Re: Political Science Nos. 51-63 - Comparative Pol was excellent.
- I took so many courses in History at Harper College because I thought Lester Hook was the most interesting History teacher I ever had. He was easy to understand, and his lectures were always easy to follow. Too bad he had to retire - you lost a great professor.
- No Geography courses were taken. Political Science and History were fun and interesting. I learned a lot participating in their classes. The teachers were excellent. Keep up the good work.
- In general, excellent instructors and the courses were also very good. Harper has an effective Geography and History Department. I cannot comment about Political Science since I did not take any courses at Harper.
- I changed my major from Accounting to Political Science.
- My Political Science class was an Honors class with Molly Waite. I got more from that class that most at UT/Austin. Ms. Waite is a wonderful teacher and the critical thinking set-up is wonderful and almost non-existent in a large university.

Previous to Harper College Experience

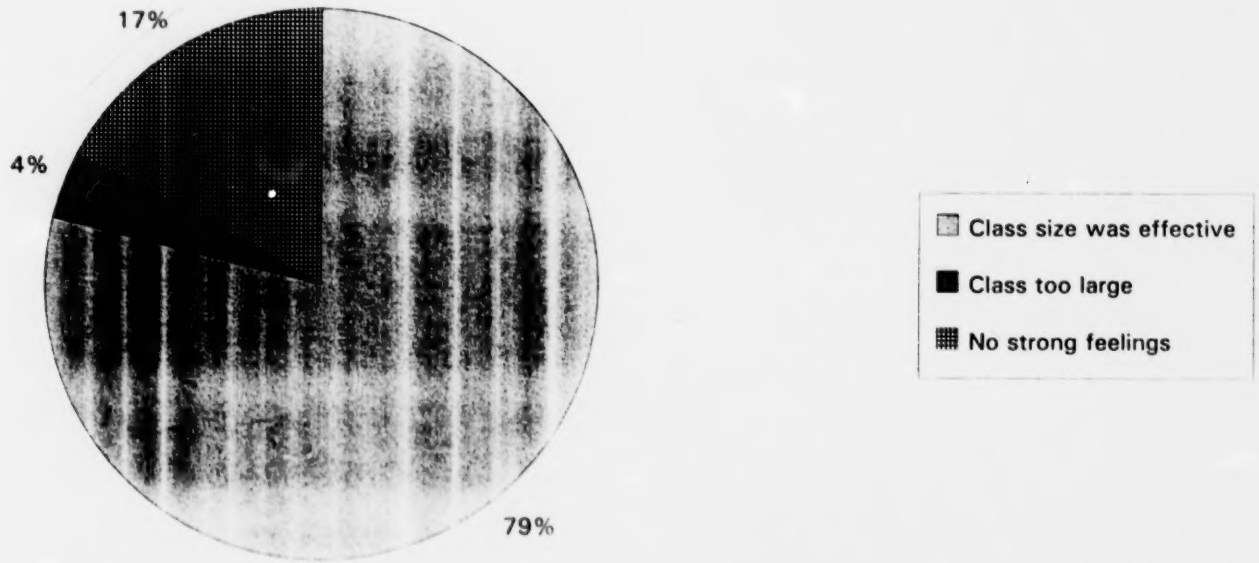


Current Educational Status

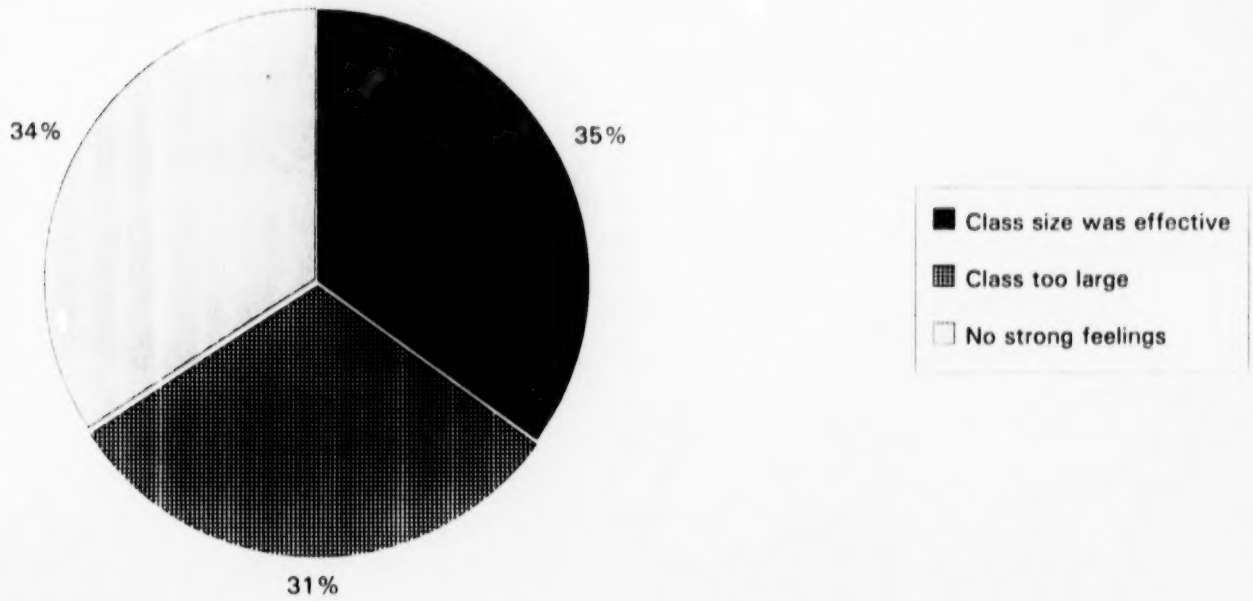



Primary Reason for Taking Geography, History & Political Science
Requirements for graduate program
Teacher certification requirements
Personal educational development
Build major or minor
General education requirement for degree
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
Percent

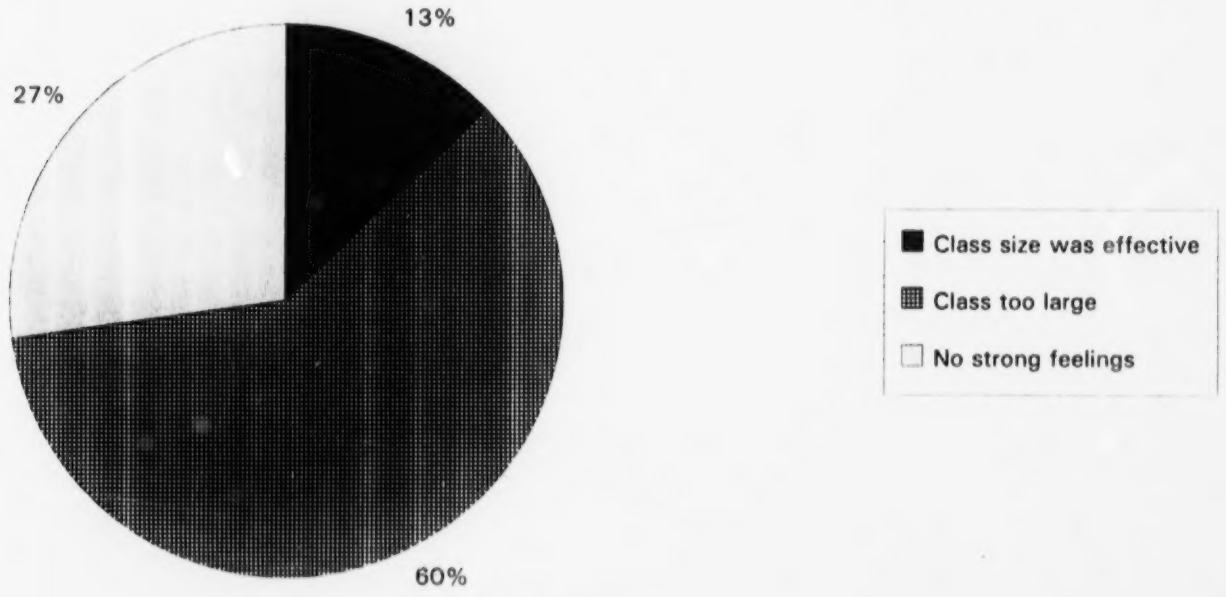
Judgements about Effectiveness of Class Sizes - Class Size Up to 35



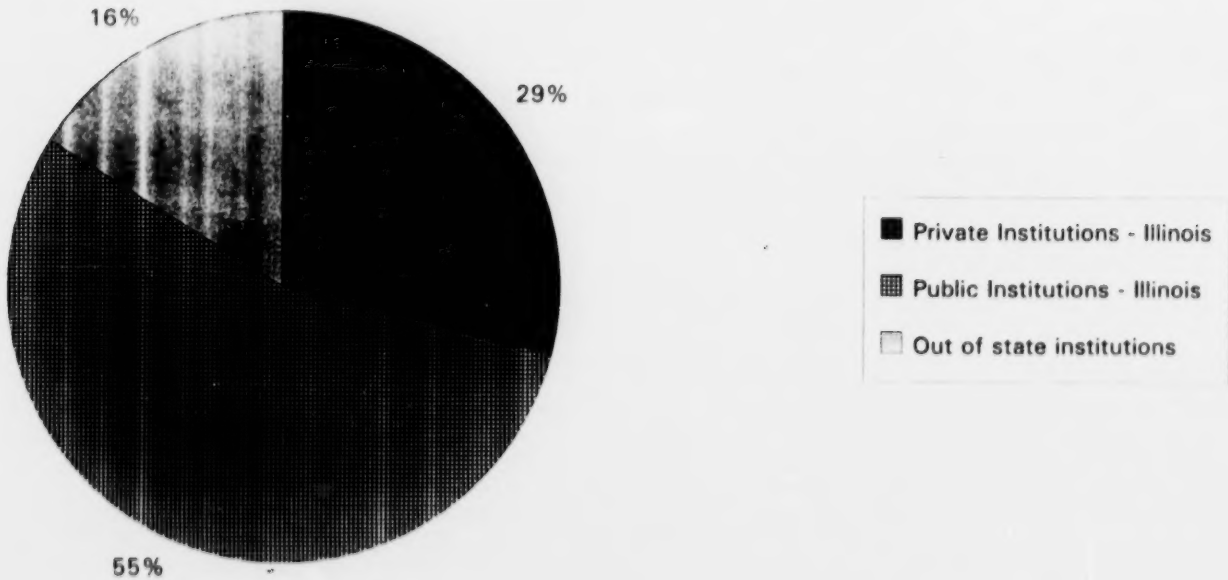
Judgements about Effectiveness of Class Sizes - Class Size 36 - 75



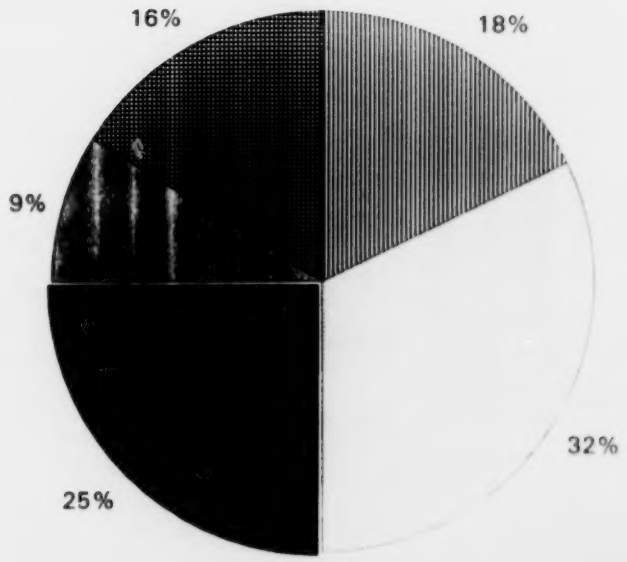
Judgements about Effectiveness of Class Sizes - Class Size 76 - 150



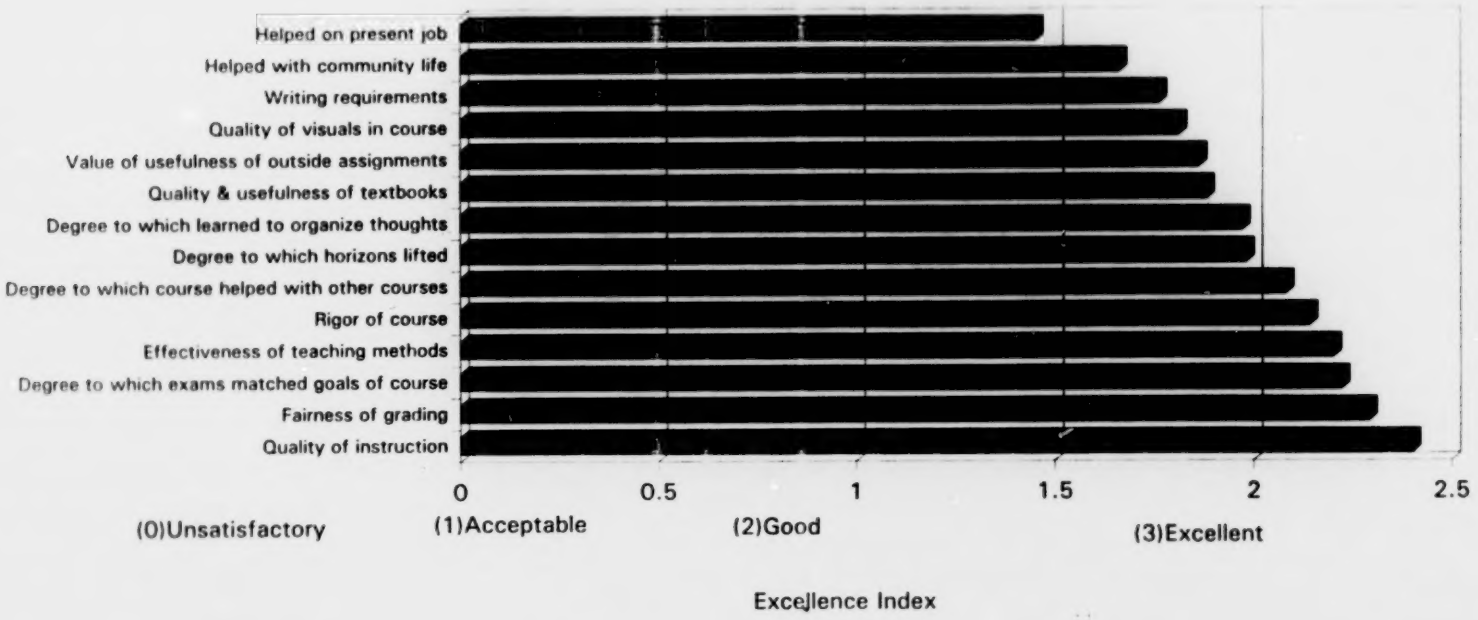
For Those Transferring - Type of College



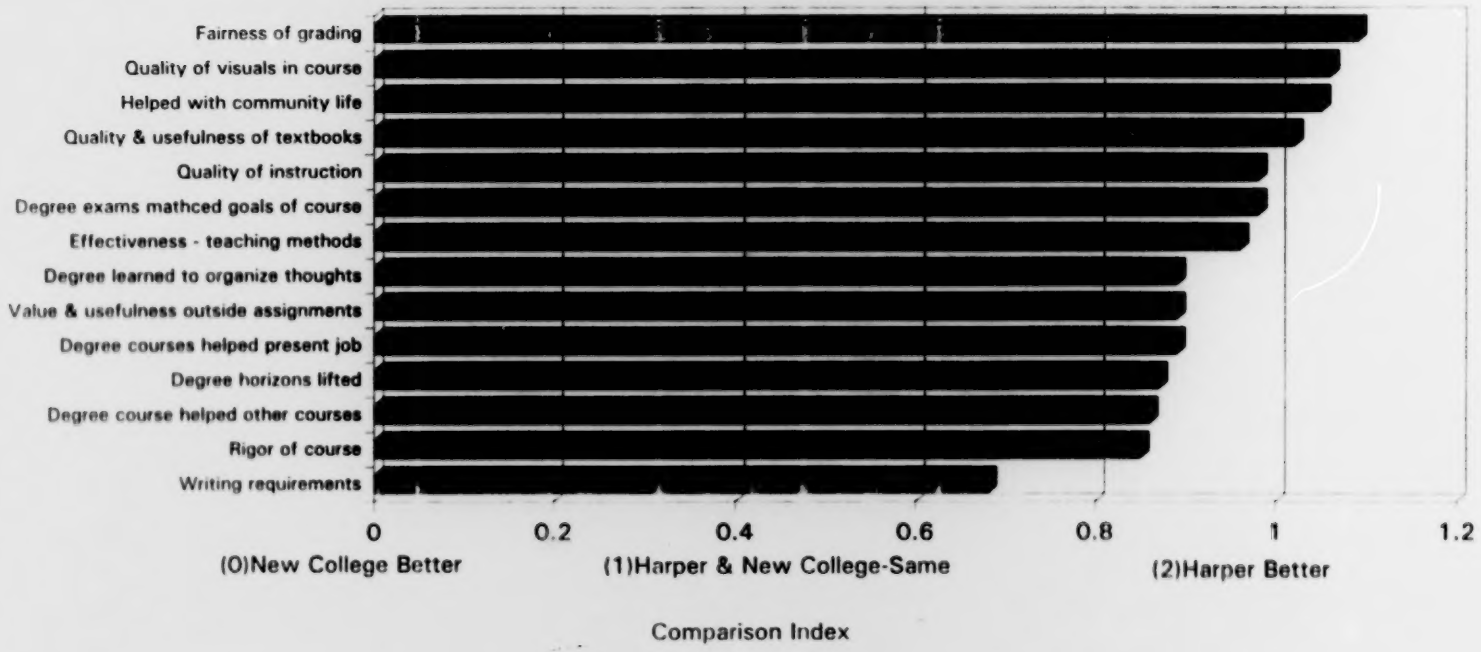
For Those Transferring - Type of Major



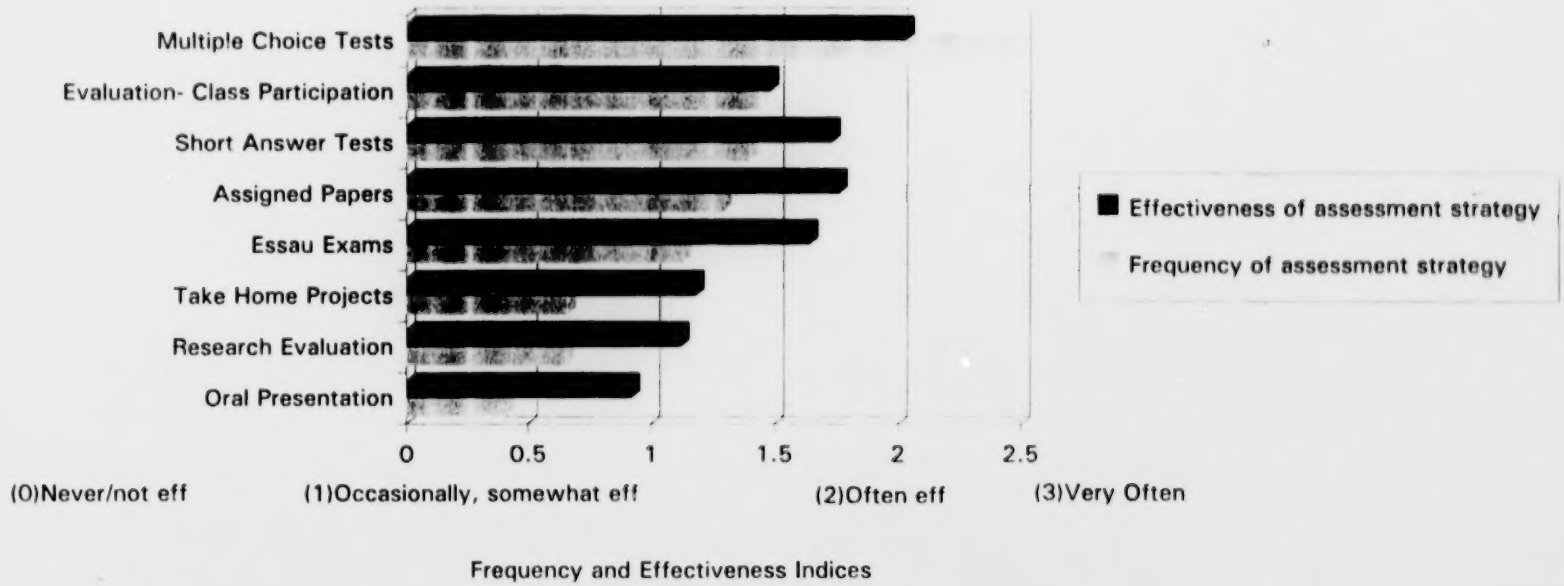
Excellence Rating of Learning Environment in Geography, History, Political Science



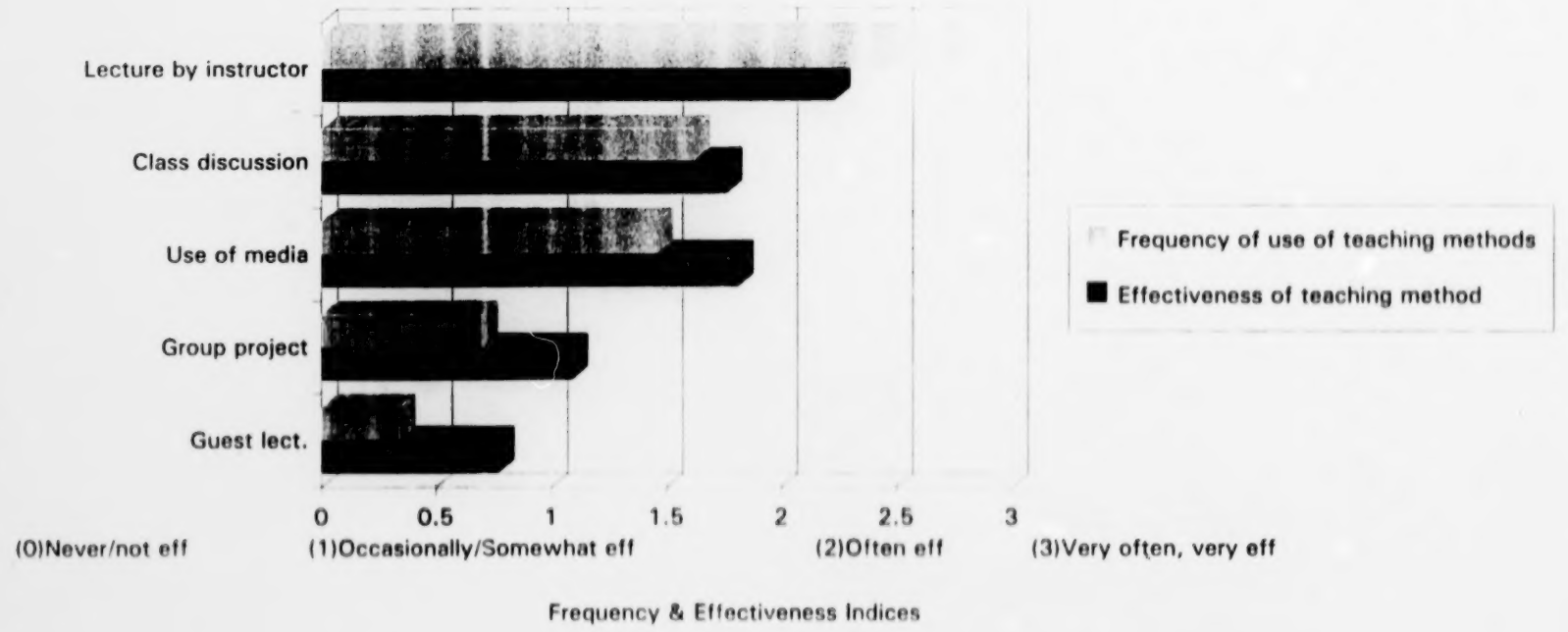
Comparison of Learning Enviroments - Harper with New College Transferred to



Evaluation of Assessment Strategies in Geography, History & Political Science



Evaluation of Teaching Methods in Geography, History & Political Science



APPENDIX

- Cover Letter

- Survey Instrument

William Rainey Harper College
1200 West Algonquin Road
Palatine, Illinois 60067-7398
708-397-3000

January 1996

Dear Student:

You have been identified as a student who has passed three or more courses in Geography, History, or Political Science at Harper College during the past five years.

Please help us evaluate these academic programs by completing the enclosed survey and returning it in the postage-paid envelope that is also enclosed. Your individual responses will remain strictly confidential and will be used only by the research team to compile an aggregate report from which recommendations for improvement can be formulated. The number on the survey enables us to remove your name from the mailing list when your completed response is received assuring you that you will not receive a second request as in the case of non-respondents.

Whether or not you have transferred to another college since attending Harper College, you will be of great help to us in this evaluation process. Thank you for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

John A. Lucas

John A. Lucas, Director
Office of Planning and Research

jc
Enclosures

SURVEY OF STUDENTS IN GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY OR POLITICAL SCIENCE

1. What was your college background prior to entering Harper College?

_____ A. No previous college

_____ B. Some college courses

_____ C. A bachelor's degree or higher

2. What is your current educational status? Check (✓) one.

_____ A. Have transferred to another college, but have not achieved a bachelor's degree yet

College _____ Major _____

_____ B. Have achieved a bachelor's degree

College _____ Major _____

_____ C. Plan to transfer to another college soon

_____ D. Have no plans to transfer to another college

3. What was the primary reason you took these Geography/History/ Political Science courses at Harper?

_____ A. To satisfy a general education requirement for my associate degree at Harper

_____ B. To satisfy a general education requirement for my bachelor's degree at the college I have - or will - transfer to

_____ C. To build credits toward a major or minor in my bachelors degree program at the college I have - or will - transfer to

_____ D. To satisfy requirements for entry into a graduate program

_____ E. For my own personal educational development

_____ F. Other - specify _____

- over -

4. Rate how beneficial the various GEG/HST/PSC courses were to you at Harper College. If you did not take a particular course, check (✓) one column for each course.

		COURSE RATING				
	COURSE	***Very Beneficial***	***Beneficial***	***Some Benefit***	***No Benefit***	***Not Applicable***
A.	GEG 101: World/Regional					
B.	GEG 103: Developing World					
C.	GEG 104: Developed World					
D.	GEG 108: Cultural					
E.	GEG 210: Economic					
F.	HST 111: American to 1877					
G.	HST 112: American since 1877					
H.	HST 121: Latin America					
I.	HST 141: Western Civ to 1650					
J.	HST 142: Western Civ since 1650					
K.	HST 151: England to 1600					
L.	HST 152: England since 1600					
M.	HST 153: British Culture/Society					
N.	HST 210: Women: Amer. Experience					
O.	HST 214: African-American					
P.	HST 243: Far East					
Q.	PSC 101: Amer. Politics/Government					
R.	PSC 210: Topics					
S.	PSC 220: Suburban/Urban/State					
T.	PSC 250: Comparative					
U.	PSC 260: Middle Eastern					
V.	PSC 270: Global					

5. How did you feel about the following lecture sizes of HISTORY classes? Check (✓) one column for each size range

	SIZE RANGE	CLASS	CLASS TOO LARGE	SIZE = EFFECTIVE	NO STRONG FEELINGS RE: SIZE
A.	1 - 35	_____	_____	_____	_____
B.	36 - 75	_____	_____	_____	_____
C.	76 - 150	_____	_____	_____	_____

6. If you felt the class size for large lectures (100 - 150) was too large, what were the negative effects? Check (✓) all that apply.

_____ A. It was too hard to ask questions

_____ B. It was too difficult to have a dialogue between the students in the class.

_____ C. I received little meaningful feedback from the instructor.

_____ D. It was too difficult to have private conversations with the instructor.

_____ E. We had multiple choice tests rather than essays.

_____ F. Other - Specify: _____

_____

Please rate the learning environment in Geography/History/Political Science courses at Harper College. If you have transferred, compare the learning environment in these same disciplines at your new college. Check (✓) one column for each item. If you have not taken Geography/History/Political Science courses at your new college, leave that side blank.

	ENVIRONMENT AT HARPER				COMPARISON TO NEW COLLEGE		
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	A EXCELLENT	B GOOD	C ACCEPTABLE	D UNSATISFACTORY	HARPER WAS BETTER E	THEY WERE ABOUT THE SAME F	NEW COLLEGE WAS BETTER
7. Quality of instruction							
8. Rigor of course							
9. Writing requirements							
10. Degree to which I learned to organize my thoughts							
11. Qualities of visuals in course							
12. Degree to which exams matched goals of course							
13. Degree to which courses lifted horizons with new ideas which had not been taught of before							
14. Degree to which courses helped on present job							
15. Degree to which courses helped in community life							
16. Quality and usefulness of textbooks used							
17. Fairness of grading							
18. Effectiveness of teaching methods							
19. Value and usefulness of outside assignments							
20. Degree to which courses helped with other courses. If not applicable, leave blank.							

How did these courses transfer? Check (✓) one column for each discipline. Leave blank if you did not take a course in a particular discipline.

Discipline	Transferred as Major or Minor Courses	Transferred as General Elective	Courses Did Not Transfer
21. Geography	❑	❑	❑
22. History	❑	❑	❑
23. Political Science	❑	❑	❑

24. If you had been assigned term papers in these courses, would that have helped you in your present situation?

_____ A. Definitely **YES** - How? _____

_____

_____ B. Maybe

_____ C. No

Look over the teaching methods and the assessment strategies you encountered in **Geography** and indicate how frequently you encountered them and how effective they were for you. Check (✓) one column in the frequency section and one column in the effectiveness section. If you did not take **Geography**, leave blank.

	Frequency Encountered				*Effectiveness*			
Teaching Methods	*A Very Often*	*B Often*	*C Occasionally*	*D Never*	*Very E Effective*	*F Effective*	*Somewhat Effective G*	*Not H Effective*
25. Lecture by instructor								
26. Class discussion								
27. Group projects								
28. Use of Media: Video/Slides/etc.								
29. Guest Lecturers								

	Frequency Encountered				*Effectiveness*			
Assessment Strategies	*A Very Often*	*B Often*	*C Occasionally*	*D Never*	*Very E Effective*	*F Effective*	*Somewhat Effective G*	*Not H Effective*
30. Multiple Choice Tests								
31. Short Answer Tests								
32. Essay Exams								
33. Assigned Papers								
34. Evaluation: Class Participation								
35. Take Home Projects								
36. Oral Presentations								
37. Research Evaluation								

Look over the teaching methods and the assessment strategies you encountered in **History** and indicate how frequently you encountered them and how effective they were for you. Check (✓) one column in the frequency section and one column in the effectiveness section. If you did not take **History**, leave blank.

	Frequency Encountered				*Effectiveness*			
Teaching Methods	*A Very Often*	*B Often*	*C Occasionally*	*D Never*	*Very E Effective*	*F Effective*	*Somewhat Effective G*	*Not H Effective*
38. Lecture by instructor								
39. Class discussion								
40. Group projects								
41. Use of Media: Video/Slides/etc.								
42. Guest Lecturers								

	Frequency Encountered				*Effectiveness*			
Assessment Strategies	*A Very Often*	*B Often*	*C Occasionally*	*D Never*	*Very E Effective*	*F Effective*	*Somewhat Effective G*	*Not H Effective*
43. Multiple Choice Tests								
44. Short Answer Tests								
45. Essay Exams								
46. Assigned Papers								
47. Evaluation: Class Participation								
48. Take Home Projects								
49. Oral Presentations								
50. Research Evaluation								

Look over the teaching methods and the assessment strategies you encountered in **Political Science** and indicate how frequently you encountered them and how effective they were for you. Check (✓) one column in the frequency section and one column in the effectiveness section. If you did not take **Political Science** leave blank.

	Frequency Encountered				Effectiveness			
Teaching Methods	A Very Often	B Often	C Occasionally	D Never	Very E Effective	F Effective	Somewhat Effective G	Not H Effective
51. Lecture by instructor								
52. Class discussion								
53. Group projects								
54. Use of Media: Video/Slides/etc.								
55. Guest Lecturers								

	Frequency Encountered				Effectiveness			
Assessment Strategies	A Very Often	B Often	C Occasionally	D Never	Very E Effective	F Effective	Somewhat Effective G	Not H Effective
56. Multiple Choice Tests								
57. Short Answer Tests								
58. Essay Exams								
59. Assigned Papers								
60. Evaluation: Class Participation								
61. Take Home Projects								
62. Oral Presentations								
63. Research Evaluation								

64. Make any other comments you would like to make about the Geography, History, and Political Science courses which you took at Harper College. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

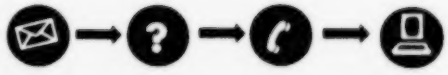
THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY.

Operational Staff:

Janice Cook, Administrative Secretary
Cal Meltesen, Research Analyst
Karla Hill, Research Clerk
Susannah Swift, Clerk
Donna Woodruff, Clerk

William Rainey Harper College
1200 West Algonquin Road
Palatine, Illinois 60067-7398

Office
of
Planning
and
Research



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